Acq■ ■Demo

Memo

Exclusive Premiere Issue

AcqDemo Progress is Strong, Path Forward is Clear

AcqDemo Spring Seminar
May 7-10, 2002
at the Sheraton Safari Hotel in Orlando, Florida

The focus of this year's seminar is on moving the AcqDemo forward and leveraging it to build a permanent personnel system.

The guest speaker is Mr. Leslie L. Bordelon, Executive Director, Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards AFB, CA. Edwards has been a participant in the AcqDemo since 1999. Mr. Tony Echols, Program Manager for the DoD Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project, will give a presentation on progress and future direction of the AcqDemo.

The agenda also includes presentations on the following topics:

— Acquisition Workforce 2005 Initiatives – Ms. Peggy Mattei
— Organizational Effectiveness – Ms. Mary Thomas
— Program Evaluation – Mr. Dick Haney/Mr. Glenn Sutton
— 3rd Cycle Pay-out Results and Comparison – Dr. Bob Rue
— OSD(AT&L), Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force Outbriefs
— Workshops and outbriefs on Human Resources, Software Demonstrations, and Conducting Pay Pools

The next issue of the AcqDemo Memo will include highlights from the seminar.

"Just three years ago, we set out to demonstrate that a flexible, responsive personnel system would enhance our ability to attract, motivate, and retain a high quality acquisition workforce. We've made good progress and the road ahead is clear," says Claude Bolton, the Executive Agent of the AcqDemo project.

In February 1999, implementation of the AcqDemo project started in order to give managers and employees the authority and flexibility they need to achieve effective processes, quality products, and a highly qualified and satisfied workforce. The results so far are significant, Program Manager Tony Echols reports: "We've reduced hiring time and administrative workloads through simplified, accelerated hiring. We're retaining high contributors by linking pay to contribution; we're meeting organizational needs through broadbanding and by giving managers the flexibility to assign employees when and where they are most needed; and we're developing a workforce with the skills needed for the future by offering more opportunities to pursue specialized knowledge."

As effectiveness continues to be evaluated, AcqDemo, as the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (OUSD (AT&L)) representative with OUSD(P&R), is working to design and develop an alternative civilian personnel management system that will meet future demands for all of DoD. The Human Resources Best Practices Task Force set up in March by Dr. Chu, Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, will review the best practices among all existing demonstration projects and identify the elements that stakeholders agree should be included in a DoD-wide, alternative civilian personnel management system. Findings will be presented later this year.
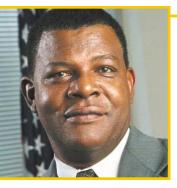
Meanwhile, AcqDemo will continue to demonstrate and test the initiatives that will drive the future system. Continued success in project planning and implementation will mean moving beyond the Acquisition, Logistics and Technology community to involve other stakeholders—human resources professionals, unions, and the legal community. "Increased participation in the AcqDemo will ensure that the new system will truly meet the needs of the entire Department," Echols concludes.

This will be the only edition of AcqDemo Memo to appear in print.

However, it will appear on the Web on a regular basis. This issue and all others will be available at www.acqdemo.com. Please become a regular visitor.

Program Manager's *Perspective*

Training

Welcome to the first edition of "The AcqDemo Memo," the AcqDemo's newsletter.

The DoD Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project - the AcqDemo - is moving forward!

We are moving forward with a new training strategy. We've revised our strategy by reaching out to a larger audience and by developing new courses. In particular, we have developed a new training course specifically targeted to Human Resources professionals, who will continue to be critical to successful implementation of the AcqDemo.

We're also moving forward by enhancing two-way communications. In the near future, you will see communications in a variety of media - including this newsletter, which will be available exclusively on-line in the future. And you'll see increased opportunities to talk back to us. I encourage you to visit our website at **www.acqdemo.com** for all the latest information about the AcqDemo.

We have a new Executive Agent, Mr. Claude M. Bolton, Jr. (who also serves as the Army Acquisition Executive and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology). He's a strong advocate of the AcqDemo. We have also moved to ensure that the AcqDemo is in sync with personnel initiatives supported by the Secretary of Defense and the White House, through the President's Management Agenda. These senior leaders are fully supportive of our efforts and innovative approaches to managing human resources.

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to those organizations that will soon join us. We anticipate 1,500 new participants by the end of '02; another 10,000 by the end of '03; with a goal of 15,000 by the end of '04. I believe that the groundwork is in place to build momentum, and I expect many organizations across the DoD spectrum to join the AcqDemo in the coming years.

I truly believe that the AcqDemo is an idea whose time has come. I look forward to working with you to make the vision a reality. We're moving forward – together.

Tony Echols, Program Manager
DoD Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel
Demonstration Project

Train the Trainer

A new training series called Train-the-Trainer will debut in July. As each new organization comes aboard the AcqDemo, it will designate representatives who will become its trainers. These trainers will develop the expertise to train those in the participating organization and act as that organization's knowledge base and conduit for training as the AcqDemo is updated. Policy updates, training material revisions, and program information will be sent to the trainers for timely dissemination to the workforce.

The Train-the-Trainer program is based on modules designed to immerse trainers in the material so they will know every aspect of it and can communicate it effectively to new participants. New trainers will have the opportunity to teach in a penalty-free environment with their own trainers observing and available for immediate feedback. Periodic review sessions are offered to keep abilities current. Training will be offered through on-site classes, one-on-one instruction, and annual East and West Coast seminars, in addition to online instruction. The program will also include an "Address Book" of AcqDemo experts and other trainers across all DoD acquisition organizations involved in the project.

2005 Task Force Report Cites AcqDemo Progress

The Department of Defense reported to Congress in March on implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce 2005 Task Force recommendations for addressing the anticipated crisis in skills and experience due to workforce downsizing and increased retirements over the next few years.

In transmitting the Report to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives, David Chu, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness wrote, "This report shows how the Department is continuing the orderly transition of our workforce to meet the national security requirements of the 21st century." He noted successful transition is ensured by the AcqDemo project, transformation of Defense Acquisition University, and the execution of the restructured Task Force recommendations.

The report gives the status of the 31 Task Force recommendations – 14 are in implementation, 14 are merged into follow-on strategies, and three

are not being pursued. The follow-on strategies include: Marketing, Recruiting and Retention; Hiring; Certification; and Career Development.

Recommendations in implementation include development of a Human Capital Strategic Planning process for the Civilian Acquisition Workforce, reengineering the hiring process, expanding recruitment efforts, increasing career-broadening opportunities, and providing timely certification training.

Many of the Task Force recommendations are reflected in ongoing AcqDemo initiatives. The report describes the AcqDemo project, which was designed to address similar concerns, as "at the heart of our efforts to achieve excellence in our mission to equip and support armed forces." It describes AcqDemo's efforts to address overall Department challenges in marketing, recruitment, and retention; hiring; and career development.

The report specifically cites the broadbanding authority, which gives managers the ability to set

pay and facilitate progression; simplified, accelerated hiring that allows more effective recruitment of quality candidates; and the Contribution-based Compensation and Appraisal System (CCAS) that provides employees feedback on strengths and weaknesses. In addition, it discusses new efforts in the areas of workforce data management and a student education, employment, and development (SEED) program.

The report concludes that, as a result of pursuing the Task Force initiatives, the Department is better positioned to understand the problems that lie ahead, to plan remedies with required resources, and to address them in a timely manner.

You can download a copy of the report from www.acq.osd.mil/yourfuture.

The AcqDemo office is moving forward with an aggressive training program to ensure that all those involved in the demo—particularly staff who will be administering the details—have a thorough grasp of the program and the software that supports it.

A Three-Phased Approach

The AcqDemo training program is divided into three phases: Orientation, Implementation, and Sustainment.

Orientation provides an introduction to the eleven initiatives, or interventions, with emphasis on the Contribution-based Compensation and Appraisal System, or CCAS. Many see CCAS as a particularly important intervention, because it addresses pay. This first phase includes Executive and All Hands overviews designed to acquaint leadership and workforce personnel with the AcqDemo through onsite briefings followed by question and answer sessions.

Much of the Orientation training can be conducted on a self-serve basis, at any hour of the day, through the AcqDemo website at www.acqdemo.com. The online tutorial includes three 14-minute videos designed to assist managers and supervisors in conducting small group discussions with employees on "First Year Experience," "Pay Pool," and "Counseling."

Implementation, the second phase, details the major elements of the Demonstration Project and the benefits to the workforce. Employees and supervisors gain an understanding of the 11 interventions as they are applied to hiring, compensation, workforce shaping and training. An in-depth view of CCAS is also offered. This includes pay pool panel information, pay ranges, and assessment writings from both the employee and supervisory perspectives. Training courses within this phase allow for role-playing in the making and receiving of assessments. The Implementation phase introduces the software used in the project (primarily a highly modified Excel spreadsheet backed by an Oracle database).

Sustainment, the final phase, goes deeply into the software, and ensures that participants won't face any surprises. This final segment of the training is primarily for those who maintain the database and access the spreadsheet for their organizations.

Human Resources Leads the Way

The AcqDemo office is moving out aggressively with a training program designed to make HRM professionals expert in all the interventions of the project. One of the earliest lessons learned from the AcqDemo has been the importance of rigorous training for the human resources community because of its significant role in facilitating all aspects of the project. The new training was conducted for the first time in April for the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal, AL.

Without rigorous prior or simultaneous training of human resources professionals, employees and managers may be flying blind when it comes to certain issues. There's a tremendous amount of behind-the-scenes work that goes into making a smooth transition into the AcqDemo. For example, each position has to be transitioned from Title V status to AcqDemo status; each employee has to be classified and his/her compensation adjusted accordingly; every time a new hire comes on board, her/his case has to be handled appropriately.

Tom Campagna, Lead Trainer for Human Resource Management, says, "We expect this course to provide the HRM specialist with the knowledge necessary to process the personnel actions associated with the project interventions. Once they understand the interventions, we also expect them to be able to tailor HRM processes in innovative ways that meet their organization's particular needs."

How Do You Get Training?

As noted above, *Orientation* training is primarily self-serve. Simply visit the AcqDemo Web site for the online tutorial or contact Darryl Burgan, Director of Training, AcqDemo Project, by phone at 703-681-3514 or email at **Darryl.Burgan@osd-acm.dau.mil**. Darryl can provide videos or arrange an on-site All Hands Brief or Executive Overview.

The second phase, *Implementation*, is provided on-demand at no cost to your organization. Again, contact Darryl Burgan, who can work with you to schedule on-site

CCAS Software Functional Design Review
Review Focuses on Changes

The annual CCAS Software Functional Design Review was held on March 20, 2002 at Ft. Belvoir, VA. This all-day event, sponsored by the AcqDemo Program Office, was attended by users and representatives from all the Services, the AcqDemo Program Office, and the main software developer. It provided an excellent opportunity for users to help shape the future of the AcqDemo CCAS Software.

The agenda for the day was full, starting with an introduction and project update from the Program Manager, Tony Echols. Mr. Echols summarized the latest activities within the Program Office and concluded with his thoughts on why the CCAS Software is important to the overall success of the project. LTC Chuck Hoppe, Commander of the United States Army Research, Development, and Acquisition Information Systems Activity (USA

RDAISA), explained some of the changes taking place on the NIPRNet (Non-Classified IP Router Network), the network on which the CAS2Net resides. Helpdesk and training results from the 3rd CCAS Cycle were also discussed. The Program Office indicated that the helpdesk support and training provided during the 3rd cycle were successful and similar resources will be provided for the 4th cycle.

The meeting had two objectives. First, participants were given the opportunity to discuss possible changes to the current version of the CAS2Net and CCAS Spreadsheet, commonly known as Option II. They prioritized potential changes, which are currently being finalized by the Program Office. Once the final requirements are established, the approved changes will be incorporated into the software for the next cycle.

Second, participants were provided a glimpse into the next generation of CCAS Software, known as Option IV. The main software developer demonstrated advancements such as on-line supervisor appraisals and managers' meetings (both with an off-line option). The Program Office plans to pilot test these major advancements during the 4th cycle with several pay pools and, if the test is successful, eventually replace Option II with Option IV. Additional pilot tests may be run in the future to expand the capabilities of the web-based software with innovations such as on-line compensation calculation and mid-cycle feedback.

AcqDemo Qs & As

What Is It?

AcqDemo is a process that allows civilian acquisition professionals to enjoy a less bureaucratic and more flexible system that recognizes and rewards performance.

Whose Idea Was It?

Congress provided the impetus, but a Process Action Team under the authority of the Secretary of Defense designed the AcqDemo project for the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (AT&L) workforce, with participation and review by DoD and the Office of Personnel Management.

Why Do We Need AcqDemo?

It is needed primarily to counter the anticipated decline in the size of the acquisition workforce by attracting and retaining top quality acquisition, logistics and technology professionals.

The rationale goes like this: The quality of DoD acquisition activities, people, and products has been under intense scrutiny in recent years. Retirements and resignations have been depleting resources. One reason for a perceived deterioration in quality has been line managers' lack of control over personnel. Therefore, the demonstration project provides managers at all levels with the necessary authority, control, and flexibility to achieve quality through recruitment, hiring, workforce education, training and opportunity.

When Did It Start?

Three years ago, February 1999.

What Are the Benefits?

— Linked pay and contribution to mission
— Increased retention of high contributors
— Better recruitment
— Reduced hiring time
— Reduced administrative workloads
— Expanded career development opportunities

Who Participates?

Right now, about 5,000 AL&T civilians representing a cross-section of the services. We anticipate an additional 15,000 will be participating by the end of 2004.

What Is the AcqDemo Mission?

To enhance the quality, professionalism, and management of the DoD AT&L workforce, a critical part of the larger Acquisition Initiatives effort.

What Are the Objectives?

— Gain greater control/authority over personnel processes
— Link pay to employee contributions to the mission
— Achieve a flexible/responsive personnel system
— Attract, motivate and retain a high-quality AT&L workforce

What Does the AcqDemo Change?

Former GS positions convert into one of three Career Paths: Business Management and Technical Management Professional, Technical Management Support, or Administrative Support.

Broadbands, covering two or more of the current levels, replace the current GS grades.

What Stays the Same?

Merit System Principles are adhered to and current occupational series and titles will remain the same.

What's the Payoff?

— Enhanced Development Opportunities
— Increased Timeliness of Key Personnel Processes
— Increased Workforce Satisfaction With the Personnel Management System
— Higher Retention Rates of "Excellent Contributors"
— Increased Satisfaction of Serviced DoD Customers With the Acquisition Process and its Products

Who Benefits Most?

Those who make the greatest contribution to the mission of the organization!

"Training" continued from p.3

training in any of the second phase courses (listed on the Web site at **http://www.acq.osd.mil/acqdemo/new_site/training/course.html.**

The third phase, *Sustainment*, is currently conducted annually on the East and West Coasts (with some functional elements of

Implementation included as needed). Darryl Burgan will lead a team of trainers on the East Coast at Ft. Belvoir August 26-30, 2002, and on the West Coast at Edwards Air Force Base September 9-12, and at Camp Pendleton on September 13.

talk bAcq

We're interested in hearing your comments about this newsletter as well as your experiences with the AcqDemo. What are we doing well? What could we be doing better?

Please send us your views, comments, and suggestions for topics that you'd like to see covered in the future. If you have a question you'd like to ask either the AcqDemo office or those who have participated in the project, please feel free to send those along as well.

If you'd like us to send you an email when new issues of AcqDemo Memo are published, just email us at **www.acqdemo.com** or call Krystal Hall at the AcqDemo Program office at 703-681-3497.